

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

This end around also shows how the campaign reform acts have been weakened and abused by what, for all practical purposes, becomes an extensive campaign ad, aired under the guise of "free speech". Practical application allows this broadcast monopoly (it controls 25% of the national market) to circumvent the rules of PACs and air political, partisan, and biased information outside of the regulated window for PACs, with the obvious and overt intent of persuading the individuals in that market to support a certain political candidate.

Such persuasive broadcasting is far outside the purpose and intent of fair and balanced broadcasting demanded and agreed to, under contractual license, by the FCC.

Please, address this gross abuse of licensing authority immediately, then return the law to it's 1980's regulated ownership guidelines.

Thank you.